



UN Doesn't Act Despite Proof of Poison Gas Use

(Second of two articles.)

By RAY CROMLEY

FOUR things are astounding about Nasser's Russian-sponsored experimental use of "poison gas" in Yemen:

1. There has been no world outcry.

Think what violent protests there would be if the U.S. used deadly nerve agents in Vietnam.

2. It has been impossible to get the United Nations to take action, tho these experimental gas attacks began in January, more than six months ago. There were about five confirmed incidents in the first half of 1967.

SPEED IS NECESSARY

The UN took no steps toward sending an investigating team to interview human victims of the gas attacks, to study soil samples or to analyze the remains of dead animals after any of these attacks. In gas attacks, rapid follow up is essential because the evidence rapidly fades away. There is no sign that the UN is even now going to ask the right to send an investigating team into the area to discourage future attacks or to get the evidence if they occur.

Apparently the United Nations was not even touched by the plight of Yemen Unit 2 of the International Committee of the Red Cross, which reported the bombing to its regional office and insisted that its members be provided with gas masks before they could continue their work.

3. U Thant, UN secretary - General, has said he cannot

make even a general statement against the use of lethal gas at this time — not even a statement which did not mention Yemen or implicate Egypt or the Soviet Union. It would serve no useful purpose, he says.

In a letter to Ambassador Jamil Baroodi of Saudi Arabia, U Thant says "you suggest that the Secretary-General might make a general statement decrying the use of lethal gas. In view of the fact that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in being faithful to the ideals and principles of the United Nations, is necessarily against war and all warlike acts, including the use of lethal gas anywhere by anyone, and since, as you well know, I have repeatedly given expression to this attitude, I do not believe that any useful purpose would be served in acting on this suggestion at the present time."

SEEK COUNTER AGENTS

Baroodi notes in reply that U Thant has not been reluctant to make statements about the war in Vietnam.

4. Even while the Russians have been experimenting with killer nerve agents (commonly called nerve gas) in Yemen, students and professors at several U.S. universities have been protesting strongly against university chemical warfare research contracts.

Yet this research is designed to find ways to counter Russian killer gases, to develop non-toxic gases and toxic gases to discourage or counter any future gas use against the U.S. and its allies.